

which men feel for their political leaders. the impulse of emulation. the desire for change. the hope of personal advantage. and. with much feebler influence. some aspiration for the public good. The balance of these forces may be entirely upset by such a passionate interest in national credit as was aroused, for instance. during the South African War. To the mind of a philosophical theorist the only one of these impulses which can worthily determine the course of government is that of provident anxiety for the public welfare. If he finds that this is of no great account amongst the mass of the voters. he may console himself with the reflection that it has generally weighed heavily with the leaders of both parties. They have often been exceedingly wrong in their views—indeed. if there be such a thing as a right decision. one of the two parties must be wrong in cases where their opinions are diametrically opposite. But they have as a rule meant well for the State, and have not permitted their private ambitions to eclipse altogether the good of the public : and this has enabled the party system to bring forth fruit out of intrinsic barrenness.

So long. however. as democracy is only a means for enlisting in politics the combativeness. jealousy. vanity or selfishness of the public. it will give us but little of the fruit which it is

capable of bearing. The chief of its potential merits is that it enables the community to profit by the energy and talents of such of its members as have a provident and kindly interest in the fortunes of their fellow-citizens. So far, it enlists these capacities very imperfectly indeed. Men of this stamp are, and probably will always be, an inconsiderable proportion of the electorate, although they are increasing in numbers and in